

# Minutes

## General Meeting

### 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022

There will be a meeting of the **Students' Union General Meeting on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2022** from 5pm via **Microsoft Teams**.

In order to ensure the meeting is kept to time please ensure all attached papers are read in advance.

#### IN ATTENDANCE

- |     |                              |    |   |
|-----|------------------------------|----|---|
| 1.1 | Members Present              |    |   |
|     | Tash Miller                  | TM | Union President                           |
|     | Murray Bushell               | MB | Sports President                          |
|     | Jess Reid                    | JR | Vice President Communities                |
|     | Dante Lopez                  | DL | Housing Officer                           |
|     | Petra Jarosova               | PJ | Equalities Officer (Women)                |
| 1.2 | In Attendance                |    |   |
|     | Aidan Wallace                | AW | Faculty Officer                           |
|     | Gaja Zivec                   | GJ | Faculty Officer                           |
|     | Niamh Hickey                 | NH | Faculty Officer                           |
|     | Mairi Calderwood             | MC | Faculty Officer                           |
|     | Fiona Kerr                   | FK | Faculty Officer                           |
|     | Liam Wray                    | LW | Faculty Officer                           |
|     | Sara Brandt                  | SB | Faculty Officer                           |
|     | 101 Ordinary Student Members | OM |   |
| 1.3 | Observers                    |    |   |
|     | Natalie Hay                  | NH | Democracy and Representation Coordinator  |
|     | Nick Manton                  | NM | Communications and Activities Coordinator |
| 1.4 | Apologies                    |    |   |
| 1.5 | Absent without Apologies     |    |   |

#### MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

#### CHALLENGES TO ORDER PAPER

#### DATES TO NOTE

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 4.1 | Education Zone – 12 <sup>th</sup> October    |
| 4.2 | Equalities Zone – 20 <sup>th</sup> October   |
| 4.3 | Sports Zone – 7 <sup>th</sup> November       |
| 4.4 | Communities Zone – 10 <sup>th</sup> November |

#### ELECTIONS & RESIGNATIONS

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 5.1   | Union By-Elections  |
| 5.1.1 | Nominations close 7 <sup>th</sup> October at 12pm (GMT)   |
| 5.1.2 | Voting opens 17 <sup>th</sup> October at 9am (GMT) and closes 18 <sup>th</sup> October 6:15pm (GMT) |
| 5.1.3 | Results announced 18 <sup>th</sup> October at 7:30pm (GMT)  |
| 5.2   | Elections Committee Election (x3)   |
| 5.2.1 | Oda Mikalsen and Ionia Matoli elected.  |

#### REPORTS

- |     |                 |
|-----|-----------------|
| 6.1 | Union President |
|-----|-----------------|

TM Had a really fantastic start. Loved settling in and getting to know the role. A few key parts I've been working on include; First Bus have sold to McGill's. There have been some teething issues, but hopefully some changes and improvements over the next few weeks. We are in communication with them, and we are hearing about your issues. VP Communities and I get the bus every day with you so we experience that one as well. We're hoping we can get some improvements made.

Over the last few weeks, I've been assisting a lot of students with emergency accommodation and enrolment issues. We're seeing a high number this year, but most of those issues have been resolved now. VP Communities, Sports President and I have been working on a cost-of-living project which is going to cover three main areas, two of which are food and one of which is energy bills. We have applied to the Stirling Fund for that and going forward we'll be able to announce more about this quite soon.

Additionally, I'm working on an enhancement theme project. Everyone has a personal tutor as a student, but we're working on revamping that scheme to have a significantly better impact on students. Will be ongoing throughout the year, and towards the end of the year, we'll be releasing a report with a set of recommendations.

On top of all of those, I'm working externally to represent a few key issues for students. I'm working on the sparqs Advisory Group for Education Officers at the moment and I'm also working with the Scottish Government on Student Poverty and Mental Health by doing a series of roundtables. Hopefully, we can see some legislative change in the next few months.

## 6.2 Sports President

MB First four months have been quite hectic. We attended all ten of the Graduations. That was a great chance for us to network and meet members of staff at the University. That was great from our point of view.

In terms of campaigns from myself, my first online campaign was Full-Time on Initiations. It's a Scottish-wide campaign online, just getting all clubs to pass on that initiations were not allowed, and it's more about welcoming students and not initiating them in that sense. At the current moment, we have the Green Ribbon Campaign which is run by Women's Hockey and their Welfare Officer. That's based around mental health and all the proceeds from the Green Ribbon Campaign go towards this charity.

We ran a couple of First Aid Courses for our members to get them trained up. That means we have more first aiders in the Sports Union, always crucial to have because our Duty Officers and our Sports Centre staff can't always be there. It's always good for each club to have a First Aider. We were hoping to have Mental Health First Aid training for all our Welfare Officers, but unfortunately due to staff illness that wasn't possible. This is something we will look to bring back at a later date

We've been pushing memberships; we had a slow start on it but we are getting there now which is great to see. Give It A Go was successful with lots of clubs reaching their targets. To be an affiliated club in the Sports Union, you need to have 10 members.

Held my first Sports Union Zone, where I was able to elect a full Executive Committee. We're really missing out on two-part time officers, which should be filled through the By-Elections. The Executive has been a massive help and it's been really good to get their opinions.

In terms of the year ahead and objectives from myself, I'm going to try and improve our payment system in the Sports Union to try and leave students a little

less out of pocket due to the cost-of-living crisis we're going through. Like President and VP Communities, we're looking at a cost-of-living package for students. Other than that, it's just about getting myself out there as much as possible; especially every Wednesday at Bucks to make sure there is a presence from the Sports Union and making sure all our members or students know that we do care about them. Sport is massive for us here.

- OM Can First Aid training be extended to other students as well?  
 MB We can look into that, maybe towards the start of second semester.  
 OM Is there a new date for Mental Health First Aid training?  
 MB We do not have one yet, but once we do, we'll get straight out there to our members to let them know when it is.  
 OM Will Mental Health First Aid and First Aid training be available to other students as well?  
 MB It would depend on space, if there is any space available, we're happy to put that out there to interested students.

### 6.3 VP Communities

JR We have begun our reinvigoration programme, which has seen Clubs Academy back in person and online, to get a society trained and informed on how they can make their society bigger and better as well as how to apply for funding throughout the year. It was a really big success, 60% of our clubs and societies signed up. As part of that, we have also expanded Clubs Academy to have a session on accessibility and inclusion and I have spent the first couple of months of summer developing the Accessibility and Inclusion Pack. This is a pack available for clubs and societies to inform them on how to be more inclusive. There was a lot of interest in that and it was great to see our societies engaging with that.

We also have our first gender-based violence responder training which will be going on for society committees later this month. This is a great opportunity for all societies to get trained on how to respond to any society member who's maybe experienced gender-based violence or sexual violence, and how they can support members more easily. It's the first time we're doing that for committees so that's really exciting.

In terms of looking further at the gender-based violence and strategy side of things. I have been working with the university on developing their gender-based violence strategy alongside preparing plans for 16 days of action. We have a really good programme lined up for 16 days of action alongside making gender-based violence training and awareness part of our goal over the next year, which is great to see. I also have been asked on to the Equally Safe Colleges and Universities Committee, which is a really great opportunity. It's a committee that has representatives from numerous Universities along with the Minister for higher and further education.

As Union President said, we've been working on the Stirling Fund for the cost-of-living crisis. My section of that was based on the Community Fridge and Pantry, which was one of my manifesto points.

Finally, housing has been of great concern over the last four months as we know, the country is in a student housing crisis and there is just simply not enough housing for students. I've been working with both the University to get students into University accommodation and have been working with the Council. I've got my first meeting with the Housing and Environment Committee this evening, so we're hopefully going to see some movement on the issue with HMOs and see how we can arrange for students to have more available housing for them.

Finally, we launched our Housing Forum, which is an opportunity for students to get more involved in the democratic and representative side of housing. We are [currently looking for Housing representatives](#) so if you're interested, it is a great

voluntary opportunity. Great to put on your CV and to see behind the scenes of policy creation and development relating to housing.

OM On the Gender-Based Violence work, does that include transphobia or just violence against women?

JR Thank you for that question. That's a really important question and that's why I often try and emphasize gender-based violence and sexual violence, because when it comes to this sort of area, often if you just say gender-based violence, people assume it is just violence against women. But we are looking at developing policy and training, which is accessible to everyone of all genders so that everyone's involved. But thank you very much for that question. It's important to make that distinction.

## UPDATES, DISCUSSION AND DECISION TOPICS

### 7.1 Renaming Student Union Part-Time Officers – Verbal Update

TM Our Part-Time Officers have a range of positions which are elected via the Elections. They have previously been known as Part-Time Officers, however, after a broad range of discussion over the summer, we found that the name doesn't quite fit with what those students do and the roles they are undertaking. These will be renamed to Volunteer Officers, as they are voluntary positions which students very selflessly give up a lot of their time for. We wanted to recognise the commitment of these roles, and the term Volunteer Officer accurately reflects this.

### 7.2 Print and Broadcast Guidelines Motion

JR The Print and Broadcast Guidelines motion was developed last year with the Media Officers and relevant presidents of the Media Societies. Unfortunately, the last General Meeting didn't meet quorum so it's been moved on to this one. The Media Guide, Print and Broadcast Guidelines, which are used by Brig along with our other media societies date back to 2013. This motion basically allows these guidelines to be modernised and for example, it would allow for paper copies of The Brig to not have to be read by the Sabbatical Officers prior to going to print. It also enables societies to keep the same safety net regarding support if there was any sort of issue or concern which would come up pre- or post-publication. It's a motion to make our printing and media more modernised and ensure that it's up to industry and expected standards.

*No speeches in favour or against the motion.*

JR This motion really supports our Media Societies and gives them both their autonomy and support from the Union.

### **MOTION PASSED (100% IN FAVOUR)**

*TM passed over Chairing responsibilities to MB.*

### 7.3 Updates to Schedules regarding Frequency of Zone Executive Committee Meetings Motion

TM Zone Executive Committee Meetings are made-up of elected zone members. So often Part-Time Officers and in the case of Education, Faculty Officers, as well as Lay Members. Currently, our Schedules dictate that those meetings happen monthly. However, in some of the Zone Executive areas the meetings aren't required monthly or we don't see a need for them to happen monthly. We don't want to take up more of student volunteer time by inviting them to a meeting and not having much to talk about. We are proposing a change to Schedule 1, point 2.1 i) to update it from monthly to meet as and when required. It's really just to make sure that when we do meet, we have substantive amounts to talk about and discuss and not to meet when there isn't anything to discuss.

OM It's just basic efficiency and preparing for the real world.

OM Will that establish a minimum number of meetings?

TM The purpose of removing it is so that there isn't a minimum number of meetings. We do find that throughout the year there is usually a substantive reason to meet. For example, the Sports Zone Executive likely will meet monthly as they often have a lot to discuss, like a lot of funding applications to get through and the same for the Communities Zone Executive. They also have quite a lot of funding applications monthly, so it does make sense for them. In the Equalities Zone and the Education Zone, we don't really have those funding applications. So, by removing that minimum number of meetings, it means that the four zone leaders are able to set meeting times as and when we see fit. It means we can hold them more frequently if we need to, but it also means that we can reduce the quantity of that as well.

*No speeches against the motion.*

*No summation was provided.*

**MOTION PASSED (100% IN FAVOUR)**

*MB passed over chairing responsibilities to TM.*

**Trigger Warning: Please note this discussion included sensitive topics for some and discusses abortion.**

7.4 Buffer Zones Motion

JR This motion aims to go to NUS Scotland Conference and what it aims to do is take a motion for NUS Scotland to make it a priority to campaign in support of the Safe Access Abortion Services Scotland Bill. What this Bill does is create a Buffer Zone around sexual and reproductive health clinics to prevent any protesters or anti-choice protesters from gathering outside these clinics and harassing people going into the clinic. The motion resolves to make this campaigning and support of this Bill a priority for NUS Scotland; encourages Student Unions to run campaigns to support students' sexual and reproductive health; to support the Bill and to actively oppose all anti-choice protests and activities across Scotland and for NUS Scotland to do the same. The motion notes that in the last five years there has been a notable upturn in the number, frequency, persistence and vigour of anti-choice groups with a significant increase from April and May 2020 seeing the largest numbers of engagement so far. Following the overturning of Roe V Wade on the 21st of June 2022 which saw an increase in activity, one of these protests took place outside of the Sandyford Sexual Health Clinic, which many of our students attend as it's one of the key clinics for sexual health relating to the LGBTQ+ community. The motion believes that these protests target students and have a direct and harmful impact on students accessing sexual and reproductive healthcare across the country. The protests are not only discriminating against people seeking abortions, but they're often discriminating against people in the LGBTQ+ community as well. In particular, transgender people which directly affects students in Stirling and in Universities across the country. We feel there is a need for the student movements in Scotland to support the Safe Access Abortion Services Bill Scotland to make it safer for people to access essential reproductive and sexual healthcare.

OM I support this motion because I think it's a really important motion to help protect not only fellow students' mental health and wellbeing but also people in the wider community that access these sexual health services as well. So I think it is a good thing in all for the community.

*No speeches against the motion.*

JR Just want to say thank you to everyone who verbally and in the comments expressed their support of this motion, and I truly believe that this will make accessing these essential services safer for students, and it's something that students deserve to feel safe when they access.

**MOTION PASSED (100% IN FAVOUR)**

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 9.1 Communities Zone and General Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> November at 5pm (GMT) via MS Teams.
- 9.2 Motions for the next General Meeting can be submitted to [natalie.hay@stir.ac.uk](mailto:natalie.hay@stir.ac.uk) until 5pm (GMT) 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**RESERVED BUSINESS**

- 10.1 No Reserved Business.